

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 12 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 2, 4 and 10 having been amended herein. Claims 1 and 9 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The specification was objected to for various informalities. In this regard, Applicants submit that the amendments to the specification and drawings set forth herein render moot the objections to the specification. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the specification are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 5 and 9 to 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,831,644 (Kato); and Claims 6 to 8 and 12 were rejected under § 103(a) over Kato. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Turning to particular claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to an ink jet recording apparatus for recording data by discharging ink from ink discharge ports of an ink jet recording head, the apparatus including a head recovering unit for performing an operation for recovering a discharge function of the ink jet recording head, the head recovering unit comprising a cap member for tightly closing the ink discharge ports, a conveying mechanism for conveying the recording medium, and a connecting unit for transmitting a driving force of the conveying mechanism to the head recovering unit, the connecting unit switching between transmission and no transmission of the driving force to the head recovering unit in conjunction with a capping operation of the cap member.

In this manner, an arrangement is provided for switching between transmitting or non-transmitting of the drive force to the head recovering unit in

association with the capping operation by the capping member, thereby making it possible to reduce the size of an ink jet recording apparatus in which the head recovering unit and the conveying mechanism are driven by a common drive source.

The applied art, namely Kato, is not seen to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of amended independent Claim 1. In particular, Kato is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of a connecting unit for transmitting a driving force of the conveying mechanism to the head recovering unit, the connecting unit switching between transmission and no transmission of the driving force to the head recovering unit in conjunction with a capping operation of the cap member.

In this regard, Kato is seen to be directed to an ink jet recording apparatus in which the conveying mechanism and the maintenance recovery mechanism are both driven by a common drive source. (Kato, abstract; Figs. 1 and 3; column 1, lines 50 to 67; and column 2, lines 1 to 6). However, in Kato, the drive source is only applied to the maintenance recovery mechanism by taking the steps of pushing a proximal end of lever 89 with pawl 11A of carriage 11. (Kato, abstract; Figs. 1 and 3; column 7, lines 6 to 25). Thus, Kato is not seen at all to switch between transmission and no transmission of the driving force to the head recovering unit in conjunction with a capping operation of the cap member, but is instead Kato is seen only to shift drive force only upon movement of carriage 11.

The remaining art of record has been reviewed and is not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Kato as a reference.

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference."

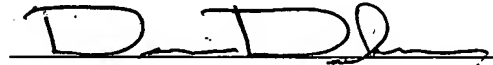
MPEP § 2131, citing Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). MPEP § 2131. Applicants respectfully submit that Kato is not seen to teach each and every element of amended independent Claim 1, either expressly or inherently. Accordingly, amended independent Claim 1 is believed to be patentable over Kato, and should be allowed. In addition, independent Claim 9 is a method claim which substantially corresponds to the features of the apparatus of amended independent Claim 1. Accordingly, independent Claim 9 is also believed to be in condition for allowance for the same reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 1.

The other pending claims are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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